Revamping Arjuna Awards Scheme

4069. DR. T. SUB BARAMI REDDY :
SHRI R.P. GOENKA :

Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 2920, given in the Rajya Sabha on the 19th April, 2002 and state :

(a) the highlights of major changes made especially those aimed at achieving greater transparency in selection procedures, to restore credibility in the Arjuna Awards Scheme, in view of the recent controversies on reported colourable exercise of official discretion;

(b) whether the Selection Committee under this policy to choose awardees would now be headed by an eminent sports person; and

(c) how the new process of selecting awardees compares with some other well known International models on sporting awards for excellence, like the annual Laureus World Sports Awards, which recognise sporting excellence around the globe ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI P. RADHAKRISHNAN): (a) Following are the highlights of major changes made especially those aimed at achieving greater transparency in the selection procedure :—

(i) Enlarged selection committee with more non-official members comprising of following :—
- Sportsperson of eminence—Chairman
- Olympians of eminence from different disciplines—5 Members
- Arjuna Awardees from different disciplines—4 Members
- Sports Administrators—2 Members
- Director/Deputy Secretary (Sports), Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India—Member Secretary.

(ii) Excellence in performance at International level only will be taken into account for selecting the Awardees.

(iii) The sportsperson found positive for use of drugs banned by the International Olympic Committee in any laboratory accredited by

International Olympic Committee will not be eligible for Arjuna Award.

(iv) Maximum Number of Awardees has been fixed at 15 in any calendar year.

(v) The prize money has been increased from Rs. 1.50 lakhs to Rs. 3.00 lakhs.

(b) Yes. Sir.

(c) While finalizing the Scheme, the selection procedures followed by several Indian National Awards, were taken into account. No international models on sporting awards were taken into consideration. This Schemes has been devised keeping in view the Indian sports standards; as such no comparison can be drawn with international awards.

New Award Scheme for Sports

† 4070. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA : Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to institute any award, other than the Arjuna Award, for life-long contribution in sports;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when such new award would be instituted ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI P. RADHAKRISHNAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government is proposing to introduce a scheme titled "Dhyan Chand Award" for life time achievement in sports. As the scheme is in draft stage, it is not possible to indicate the details at this stage.

(c) The scheme is expected to be instituted in the current financial year.

Cricket ties with Pakistan

4071. DR. KARAN SINGH : Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have taken any decision to revive cricket ties with Pakistan, as a first step to improve relations with that country, as suggested, of late, by Pakistan President;

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi,